RAGGED SCHOOL UNION QUARTERLY RECORD.

OCTOBER, 1878.

OUR WORK IN LONDON:

Its Increase, Extent, and Crisis.

On pages 90 and 91 of the last number of our *Quarterly Record* will be found the details of the recent extensions of Ragged School work in London. With two or three exceptions there has been a marked and almost unprecedented advancement in the various branches of the Society's work in every part of the metropolis. The increase has extended to no less than twenty-eight departments.

The details referred to relate to the years 1875-6, 1876-7, and 1877-8. The extensions of 1876 as compared with 1875 were so considerable as scarcely to leave much hope for further increase for 1877-8. Reference to the figures will show that very decided progress was made in the last as compared with the first mentioned year, and by way of illustration we will call attention to seven only of these efforts:—

Increase in average attendance of Sunday scholars . . .	1,853
Increase of scholars in Night Schools	2,535
Increase of young persons at Religious Services conducted specially for them	1,784
Increase of adults at Religious Services conducted specially for them	1,181
Increase of attendants at the Mothers' Meetings . . .	1,324
Increase of members of the Bands of Hope	1,414
Increase of depositors at the Penny Banks is more than . .	8,000

It would be misleading to add these figures together, and to suppose that we were dealing with that total number of individuals, for the same person is often to be found forming a part of the separate groups named. Nevertheless, the *additional* numbers benefited by the various mission, school, and social agencies carried on in connection with the London Ragged School Union is very great, and demands our unfeigned gratitude for these marks of the Divine favour.

It is, however, very remarkable that during the three years that these efforts have been made to draw in and benefit increasing numbers of the very poor of the Metropolis, both juveniles and adults, the support received from the public has become less and less in each successive year. This will be seen by reference to the following statements:—

1875-6.

Received by Ragged School Union in—	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
Donations . .	697	2	9				
Subscriptions . .	1,115	12	10	Amount of Aid rendered to the Schools in 1875-6 from the funds of Ragged School Union . .	2,499	7	5
Collections . .	95	4	5				
Contributions for special purposes .	377	19	11				
	2,285	19	11				

1876-7. Received in	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
Donations . .	348	19	4				
Subscriptions . .	1,031	4	4	Amount of Aid rendered to the Schools in 1876-7 from the Ragged School Union funds . .	2,718	11	9
Collections . .	68	15	8				
Contributions for special purposes .	411	18	4				
	1,860	17	8				

1877-8.	£	s.	d.
Received in			
Donations . .	232	8	6
Subscriptions . .	982	8	0
Collections . .	85	7	11
Contributions to objects named by the givers. . .	365	12	9
	1,665	17	2

	£	s.	d.
Amount of Aid rendered the Schools in 1877-8 from the funds of the Ragged School Union was . .	2,761	19	9

The Receipts in three years were—	£	s.	d.
for 1875-6 . .	2,285	19	11
„ 1876-7 . .	1,860	17	8
„ 1877-8 . .	1,665	17	2
	£5,812	14	9

The Aids rendered in three years were—	£	s.	d.
in 1875-6 . .	2,499	7	5
„ 1876-7 . .	2,718	11	9
„ 1877-8 . .	2,761	19	9
	£7,979	18	11

It is thus evident that while the Parent Committee have increased their grants in aid, in each of the three years, to sustain the increasing work of the schools, the amount they have received from the public has been singularly and almost painfully inadequate. It will also be seen, by comparing the total received with the total of aid rendered to the schools, that the Committee have not only voted the whole amount of their Donations, Subscriptions, Collections, and Special Contributions received during the three years, but also a further sum of £2,167 4s. 2d. And in addition they have had to meet all the working expenses of conducting a Central Society.

The Committee have thus far been enabled to meet all ordinary claims, but only by using their extraordinary sources of income, such as legacies left to the Society. During the last few days this fund has been further reduced by the withdrawal of £1,000, without which the quarterly grants to the various schools and the claims on the Union for current month would have remained

unpaid. During a long course of years they have never gone into debt, and they have no intention to do so. They have, however, been so short of funds as to cause anxiety, and to render the suspension of grants necessary, but appeals to the Society's friends and supporters have always met with a kind and liberal response.

The following *résumé* will give an idea of the great work still carried on under the auspices of the Parent Committee:

Separate buildings	159
Sunday Morning and Afternoon Schools	95
„ Evening Schools and Services	79
Ragged Churches	82
Mothers' Meetings	85
Men's Clubs	15
Clothing Clubs	35
Bands of Hope	40
Special Religious Services for Children	84
Lending Libraries	82
Penny Banks	86
Children in Sunday Schools	30,000
„ „ Day Schools	5,800
„ „ Night Schools	9,200
Young people attending Religious Services	6,400
„ members of Bands of Hope	5,600
Adults attending Ragged Churches	8,300
Women at Mothers' Meetings	3,800
Men, members of Workmen's Clubs	1,500
Depositors in Penny Banks about	30,000
Paid Masters and Mistresses	240
Voluntary Teachers	2,600

Very many of these children are by compulsion pupils in Board Schools, where they are receiving a useful secular education, and concurrently in the Ragged Schools are being trained in a knowledge of "the holy Scriptures which are able to make them wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus;" and unless this training be given in Ragged Schools, it is feared that a large

proportion of these children would grow up in ignorance of "the Gospel of their salvation."

The Committee of the Ragged School Union have done what they could, not only to prevent any of these efforts from being crippled by want of funds, but have fostered their development by increasing their grants in support of them.

The foregoing statements are thus clearly set forth that the friends of Ragged Schools may fully understand the Society's present position, both as to the extent of the work being done, and the amount of support being received. We earnestly appeal to the friends of Ragged Schools to support the policy of the Committee by which the various works of Christian benevolence and usefulness may be strengthened and sustained. Without the help and encouragement given by the Committee of the Union many of the most successful efforts to benefit the poor and the fatherless and the widow must inevitably have been abandoned. To depend upon an extraordinary and uncertain source of income for the entire working expenses of a large central society, and from the same source to grant considerable subsidies to the schools, may be wise to tide over the difficulties of a season, or to give an important impetus to a philanthropic movement, but, in the common nature of things, cannot be long continued, nor very frequently repeated.

The Committee therefore appeal with confidence to the friends of the Society for their kind and generous sympathy and assistance.

Cheques, crossed "Barclay, Bevan, and Co.," Post-office Orders on London, and Cash, sent addressed to Mr. Joseph G. Gent, Secretary, No. 1, Exeter Hall, London, W.C., will be thankfully received and will meet with immediate attention.

HOARDING SEED.

It is very natural for good men to desire to perpetuate their influence; to do something which may result in lasting benefit to the sons of men. With this end in view, they sometimes seek to accumulate great wealth, and then, at the close of their lives, by testamentary provisions, ensure the accomplishment of the permanent good which they did little to promote while alive. There is much to be said in favour of this mode of operation. Persons are thus enabled to make comfortable provision for their own necessities; to enjoy the fruits of their labour during their lives, and leave the world with a comfortable assurance that after their death men will be better for their having lived. There is, however, a serious drawback to the advantages which this method offers, since it is impossible for any persons to say what shall occur after they are dead. Wills may be broken, intentions defeated, bequests diverted, funds misappropriated, and it may often come to pass that the money acquired, perhaps in unblest pursuits, or saved through personal economy and privation, may at last be consumed by idle and luxurious persons, whose only fitness for the administration of sacred trusts is shown in their shrewdness in working into snug berths, and making themselves comfortable, instead of benefiting those whose welfare is entrusted to their care.

Hence instances may be found where funds which were left as a sacred trust long years ago are utterly perverted from the objects intended by those who accumulated them, and are devoted to ends which would have seemed worse than useless to the honest persons who supposed that in their benefactions they were making provision for the permanent profit of their fellow-men.

It is a question, after all, whether we may not profitably exchange this prospective and posthumous usefulness for the less imposing, but more certain results of present devotion to God. If we had some choice seed from a distant land, the dissemination of which would be incalculably valuable to those around us, what would be our natural course of procedure? Would we hoard it in some granary, and continue purchasing more wherever we had opportunity, and storing it with the utmost care year by year until such time as we should have enough of it to supply the wants of a nation? Or should we rather take pains to sow every seed of which we could possess ourselves? Surely no sensible man would think of hoarding seed when he desired it to be scattered abroad. He would sow it, and instead of the slowly accumulating store which he might obtain by purchase, his seed would bring forth thirty, sixty, and a hundredfold, and soon the hills and valleys would be clothed with its verdure and its fruitfulness.

To-day the Lord has need of all our wisdom, and of all our labour, and of all our means. We may think that He will be better pleased if we retain everything in our own possession, and increase it as we have opportunity, till at last we bring to Him a noble gift, the product of a life of toil; but we may be mistaken in our estimate of the matter. No interest that money can draw, no profits in any business which we may do, can compare with the magnificent fruitfulness of the precious seed which is sown in tears in obedience to a Divine command. A man may place ten thousand pounds at interest, and direct that when it shall have accumulated tenfold it shall go to build up some grand charity, or to sustain some costly work of benevolence, but just around the corner in an alley there may be playing a ragged boy, hungry for bread, needing clothes, thirsting for instruction, whom a thousandth part of this hoarded wealth might save from the perils that threaten to ruin him and make him a curse in the land, and bring him up to a manhood so noble, so useful, so fruitful in good works that his sublime life should dwarf into utter insignificance the grand foundation which money alone could lay.

No doubt there were people who were founding churches and endowing colleges and establishing monasteries, and doing many mighty works in the days of Luther's boyhood; but the lowly families who gave the hungry singing boy a crust or a bowl of soup, as he begged his bread from door to door while he pursued the studies which prepared him for his work, may, like the widow who cast her two mites into the treasury, have done more than all of these, by means of the humble gifts thus bestowed upon one of the Lord's little ones.

There is no temple so grand as the temple of the Holy Ghost; no stone that was ever chiselled so precious as the living stones of which God builds His house; and he who to-day does his present duty to the full extent of his powers among the poor, the needy, the lowly, and the distressed; he who feeds the hungry, and clothes the naked, and instructs the young, and reclaims the erring, may be laying the foundation of a work which even in this world shall be manifest in more magnificent results than if he built a church, a cathedral, or an asylum. The little dirty-faced boy, whom you pass in the street, while you are intent on gaining money to do good with, some time when you are dead and gone, may perhaps live to electrify the world with burning words of truth divine; and one incorruptible seed sown in his heart to-day may bring more fruit than all the investments and accumulations of your lifetime. It is well enough to found permanent institutions, and to make provision for events which may come; but what if the old oak which you have planted and cultivated comes to be a gigantic mass of hollowness and decay, a home for bugs, and grubs, and worms? Shall we still insist upon preserving the old tree? Shall we not rather find the true line of

living succession, not beneath the rotting bark, and in the decaying trunk of the ancient tree, but in the lithe and tender saplings that are growing up around it, which may live and flourish in vigour long after the giant of the forest has sunk in rottenness and decay? And if so, may we not better serve the end we seek by scattering fresh acorns, by sowing the seed of truth, and by cultivating living men instead of dead institutions?

Let us then broadcast our seed, and while trusts are misused, bequests perverted, and funds devoured by greedy cormorants, who swarm where money is to be handled, let us be our own executors so far as may be, and labour to accomplish present good in the cause of God. A soul saved is something to last in time and in eternity. One sinner plucked as a brand from the burning, and sent forth upon a career of usefulness in the world, may accomplish more for God and for humanity, and bring more joy to our own hearts in the eternal years to come, than could result from any appropriation of funds, from any accumulation of wealth, from any liberal bequest, or widely trumpeted donation which we might make. Let us trust God with our seed. The safest way to keep it is to sow it. The surest way to multiply it is to scatter it by all waters; and if we shall do this, we may look up to God for a blessing upon it, and expect in the harvest day to find our sheaves standing thick upon the heavenly hills.—*Christian Treasury.*

ONE OF THE OLDEST OF THE LONDON RAGGED SCHOOLS: KING EDWARD STREET, SPITALFIELDS.

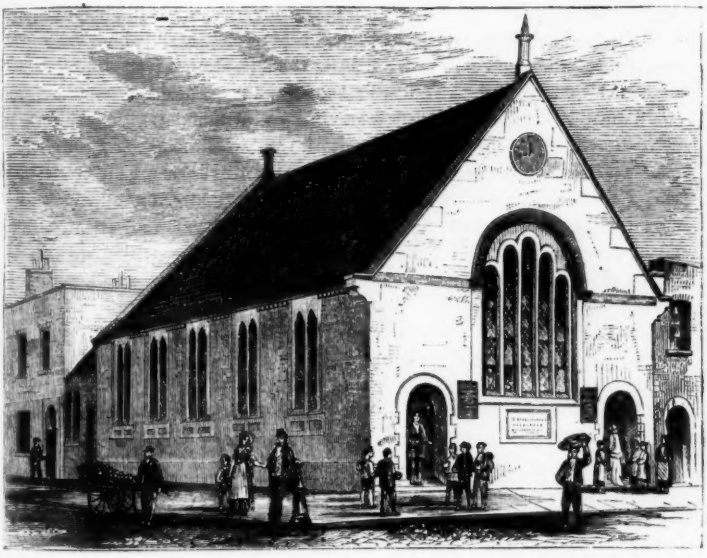
It is just thirty-two years since that a few earnest men and women, commiserating the condition of the poor neglected children of the neighbourhood of Spitalfields, opened a very small school in a room in the little cottage seen in the rear of the Ragged School shown in our illustration on next page.

In the third Annual Report of the Committee of the Ragged School Union, the following account is given of the school, which in 1847 had become of some importance:—

"This school has been open about ten months, and is situated in a very poor and wretched neighbourhood. Upon visiting the inhabitants of the immediate locality, there were found in 400 houses 1,005 families, having 1,533 children, only 215 of whom attended any school, and 196 only could read. In the 1,005 families were found only 211 Bibles and twelve Testaments. In the midst of this ignorant population a few teachers opened a school in a small and dirty room, for which they paid two

shillings per week. In three weeks this room was crowded by seventy children, who, although extremely rude, seemed desirous of instruction In order to obtain accommodation for increasing numbers, premises were taken which consists of a stable and cow-yard, which have been converted, at an expense of £100, into a spacious schoolroom, measuring twenty-five feet by upwards of fifty. The average attendance is now 220. Towards the expenses thus incurred the Committee have granted £25 and also £10 towards its annual expenditure."

This comprehends the humble beginning of an institution that has done so much during the last thirty-two years to ameliorate the condition of



this densely populated district. For some four or five years the work proceeded with great vigour in the "old stable," every part of the frail structure being crowded. A cottage was subsequently rented, and served as a refuge for about twelve of the most destitute boys, who were housed, clothed, fed, and instructed in shoemaking and tailoring.

The large and ever increasing number of children applying daily for admission to the school rendered it necessary that something more should be done to meet the wants of this necessitous district. A public meeting, held at the instance of the Committee of the Ragged School Union in the Guildhall, and presided over by the Lord Mayor

and supported by most of the leading philanthropists of that day, resolved that a Refuge and School of Industry on an extensive scale be established in the East of London. The sum of £430 was collected at the meeting, and as the result of this and other meetings a piece of freehold ground was purchased, and in due time a substantial and commodious structure was erected in Albert Street, at a cost (including the ground) of rather more than £4,000, and has since been known as the King Edward Ragged and Industrial Schools and Eastern Refuge.

The first stone of this new building was laid on the 5th November, 1850, by the late Sir Thomas Proctor Beauchamp, whose pamphlet, entitled "Attend to the Neglected and Remember the Forgotten," which together with certain letters addressed by Mr. H. R. Williams to the *Times* and other papers on "The Dens of London" and "The Poor of Spitalfields," did good service by calling the attention of the public to the lamentable destitution and neglect of large masses of the population.

In July, 1851, the new building, providing accommodation for the daily instruction of 500 children, with dormitories and workrooms for forty girls, was opened by the Earl of Shaftesbury, supported by the Duke of Grafton, Lord Radstock, Samuel Gurney, Charles Buxton, and many other well-known and generous supporters of the Ragged School movement. In the course of a short time the whole of this building was filled with the poorest children of the neighbourhood, and before three years had expired another school was opened for boys in the premises known as the "Ragged Church" (built on the site of the old stable) in King Edward Street. In the Refuge, Day and Sunday Schools, there were at this time upwards of 1,200 children receiving instruction.

The early efforts were made primarily for the benefit of "outcast and destitute children;" but it was soon found that they could not be thus limited. Seasons of sickness and distress followed each other with alarming rapidity, and taxed the energy and resources of the committee, and called into active requisition the willing and able services of a large number of the voluntary teachers identified with the working and progress of the schools.

The visitation of cholera in 1866 will not soon be forgotten by the teachers. Many others will also remember with gratitude the help afforded to them in their time of extreme prostration and need by Mr. Montague and those associated with him in the work of mercy to which they devoted themselves.

The first Sunday in August, 1866, was a "black" Sunday. In the morning the superintendent was called to see two of his scholars who were dying. One expired shortly after he arrived, and the other a few hours later in the day. At the Sunday Evening School the teachers were surrounded by children, many of whom had already lost some

member of their family, while others begged them to go and see relatives who were supposed to be dying. One poor girl who had lost her father and mother (both in one day) was at once admitted into the Refuge. Another poor little girl who was sobbing very much, in reply to the inquiries of her teacher, said, "Father's dead." The scene at the school that night was one never to be forgotten by those who witnessed it. The teachers were called together at the close of the Sunday Evening School to make such hasty arrangements as time permitted, and by adjournment to the following evening with a view to the formation of a committee to relieve the most necessitous and pressing cases. They did meet, and with Mr. Montague at their head six volunteered to become visitors, and pursue a house-to-house visitation; and after seeking God's guidance and direction, and commending each other to His care and keeping, they started with the few pounds they had collected among themselves to carry out their mission of mercy, and to render such help as was in their power. But they soon found that the cholera was making rapid strides, and distress, like a gaunt spectre, met them on every hand, and their scanty means of relief were soon exhausted, and necessitated immediate applications to others for assistance. They wrote to several friends of the Institution, among others to Mr. H. R. Williams, who sent the following reply:—

"August 10th, 1866.

"DEAR MONTAGUE,—Draw upon me for whatever is necessary, we cannot allow the poor people to want at a time like this. I shall be glad if you will give me a call. "Yours very truly,

"H. R. WILLIAMS."

About this time the Mansion House relief committeee was formed, when the facts connected with this neighbourhood were at once represented to that body, who generously supplied most of the funds needed for this work of benevolence and mercy.

These admirable visitors had by this time organised a system of relief, and night after night—often till midnight—was given ungrudgingly to the poor. In the end it was found that they had under visitation 342 houses, containing upwards of 1,100 families. In eight houses there were found living no less than 232 men, women, and children. In these 342 houses there were no less than 340 cases of cholera, resulting in fifty-three deaths (six in one house in less than a week).

To the families under their care they distributed 1,449lb. of meat, 693lb. of rice, 414 loaves of bread, 23 gallons of beef-tea, 21 gallons of port wine, 7½ gallons of brandy, 56lb. of arrowroot, 575 yards of flannel and calico, 58 blankets, two sets of bedding, 70 pairs of boots, 256 garments, various, and 1,050 dinners to the weakly and the convalescent.

In addition to all this the sum of £50 was given to the convalescent to purchase tools, and to redeem various articles that had been pledged, and £180 was distributed over the three following years to the widows and orphans, by which many were permanently helped and placed in comparative comfort.

These figures show the very serious work undertaken by a band of voluntary teachers on an occasion of great emergency; their self-imposed duties took them into narrow and confined rooms, in which the dead and the dying were lying in awful juxtaposition; day by day and week after week found them unpaid but willing agents in the haunts of disease, with men, women, and children dying around them; but God in His good Providence preserved them all, and without an exception they are still labouring in the King Edward Ragged Schools.

In 1870 the Elementary Education Act passed, making it compulsory that all children between five and thirteen years of age should be brought under instruction.

The committee felt that they could no longer rely upon generous friends to carry on the work of day school instruction, and resolved to convert the building in Albert Street into an Industrial School for girls, and to invite the School Board for London to occupy the building in King Edward Street as an elementary day school. This enabled the committee to accomplish the twofold purpose of carrying on the work of daily instruction, and to furnish a Home for 100 girls, which was soon filled, and to which another has since been added for 110 more. These alterations and additions involved a very heavy outlay, but the results are of an eminently satisfactory character, thanks to a vigorous committee, of which Mr. J. H. Lloyd, of 3, Lime Street, is honorary secretary.

The School Board for London has lately opened another large permanent school in the immediate vicinity, to which the whole of the scholars attending the Day School of the King Edward Ragged School (which had been used by the Board only as a temporary school) have been transferred, the fee to which is one penny per week. The building in King Edward Street is now entirely appropriated to Ragged School purposes. There are Sunday Evening Schools, with 434 children on the books; Week-night Schools for boys and girls above thirteen years of age, with 120 on the books; a Penny Bank, a Band of Hope, a Sewing Class, a Christian Instruction Society, a Benevolent Society for helping the sick and destitute, Parents' Meetings, an Annual Exhibition of articles made by the children, and a Free Circulating Library for parents and scholars.

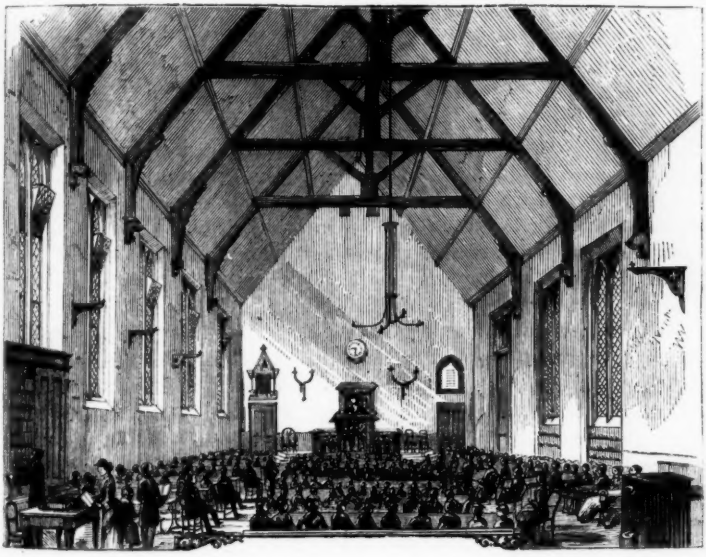
The Parents' Library has been most successful; upwards of 10,000 exchanges of books were made during the last year. The plan adopted is for each teacher to look after the books lent to the parents of the

scholars of his class. No one is allowed to have a book except those recommended by a teacher, who fills up a form provided for that purpose. The following is a copy of one shown to us :—

"To the Librarian of
"The King Edward Ragged Schools.

"I beg to recommend that Mr....., residing at.....have the use of the books in the Parents' Library, and I will undertake to look after the same.

"Signed.....
"Teacher."



INTERIOR OF THE RAGGED SCHOOL IN KING EDWARD STREET.

The books are, as a rule, sent back regularly, and very few are lost. Nor have the children been forgotten; carefully-selected books to the value of £27 were added to the boys' and girls' library last year. We hold that one of the best means for preventing the circulation of pernicious literature is to place in the hands of our boys and girls something better, in the shape of good books written in an interesting form.

The committee of the King Edward Ragged Schools are largely indebted to the Religious Tract Society, which has always allowed them to have books at a reduced rate.

The Benevolent Society for helping the sick and destitute has been largely and liberally supported by the boys and girls in situations. No less than £11 8s. 0d. has been contributed by them during the year, twenty-five families have received help, two guineas were contributed to the Indian Famine Fund, and a guinea to the London Hospital. The first Sunday after the Princess Alice was run down the boys and girls who were old enough to understand the extent of the terrible calamity were anxious to show their sympathy for those who had been bereaved; one of the elder boys got up and proposed that two guineas out of their fund should be given to the widows and orphans. This proposition was seconded by another lad, and we need hardly add was carried unanimously. The next day that amount was kindly handed to the Lord Mayor by Sir Robert Walter Carden, who is one of the vice-presidents of the school.

The number of children who apply for admission to these schools on Sunday evenings is greater than the place will accommodate. Frequently many have to be sent away because there is no room for them. It is proposed to pull down three old cottages adjoining the schools, and to build four large class-rooms at a cost of between six and seven hundred pounds. About £400 have been received and promised. We hope that the funds needed will soon be placed in the hands of the committee, so that they may erect a building where the teachers can labour with greater advantage to the children.

At the last annual meeting, held on the 17th of September, a most encouraging report was read by Mr. Montague, giving a detailed account of the work of the past year. Its adoption was moved by Sir Robert Walter Carden, and seconded by Captain Ronaldson. On that occasion were distributed thirty-three prizes to servants for good conduct while in their situations (given by Lord Shaftesbury and the Committee of the Ragged School Union); thirty prizes for good conduct and regular attendance at the school; and thirty-nine prizes to the boys and girls of the Sunday Evening School, and also to the girls of the Industrial Schools, Albert Street, Mile End New Town, and Andrew's Road, Cambridge Heath, for excellence of work exhibited at the Exhibition recently held in connection with these schools. After the distribution Sir Robert Walter Carden came forward and said that he had been requested to perform a very pleasant duty on behalf of the teachers and scholars of the Ragged School. Their old and much-esteemed friend Mr. H. R. Williams, the treasurer, had worked hard for the schools during the last thirty-two years, and they wished him to accept, as an expression of their thanks and gratitude, Holman Hunt's "Light of the World." It was accompanied with their earnest wishes for the continued health and

happiness of their esteemed friend. The well-known engraving was enriched and rendered the more effective by water-colours, beautifully executed, and mounted in a rich gold frame. Sir Robert, in the name of the teachers, also presented a copy to the Rev. William Tyler, who had worked on the committee with Mr. Williams for a like number of years.

We will only add that the whole of the buildings referred to are freehold, and are in trust, and that Mr. H. R. Williams, of Oak Lodge, Highgate, is the treasurer, and that Mr. Charles Montague, of 67, Turner Street, London, is the hon. secretary of the Ragged School.

SUCCESSFUL CHRISTIAN PHILANTHROPY.

Success in lawful business is always gratifying, and when that lawful business is the gathering in of the useless waifs of society, and the remoulding of them into useful members of the community, that success is all the more gratifying.

It is now twenty-six years since the Wandsworth Boys' Home commenced its good mission, and during those years it has received the large number of 1,200 poor neglected youths, who had sinned enough, but who had been more sinned against than sinning.

The treatment in the Institution as to discipline, education, and industry has had the result of making from 80 to 90 self-restraining and self-supporting members of society out of each 100 never-do-well specimens of youthful humanity admitted. These individuals, who, by means of this one institution, have become wage-earners, and are now a source of wealth and strength to the country, had they been left uncared for would in all probability have added to that extent to the criminal population.

The Institution has had the advantage of direction by the same master mind from the commencement, in the person of Mr. John Leyland; but for the last twenty years the details of management have largely rested with Mr. John F. Newland, the superintendent. This long and successful service was lately made the occasion of recognising the good—the almost noble—conduct of the boys in training by having a special *fête*-day. That this good conduct has not been exaggerated is proved by the small percentage of punishment required to maintain order and discipline, the readiness with which the boys conform to the rules, and the large amount earned during the year by the boys as their personal wages.

The *fête*-day was in the middle of August, when the steamer Lotus was engaged to convey the whole 200 inmates, staff, and friends from Wandsworth to Gravesend. The living freight embarked at the wharf

in Wandsworth at 9 a.m., and arrived at Gravesend at 12.30, when dinner was served on board. The boys afterwards disembarked, and marched, the brass band leading the way, to the Milton Industrial School, to pay a friendly visit, where they received a cordial welcome. The Milton boys went through their drill in most effective style, and then, with their banner flying and their drum-and-fife band playing, accompanied their visitors back to the pier at Gravesend. The schools saluted each other, after a very happy and unexpected visit, and each returned to their respective homes. The company were all on board again by 3.30. Nuts, fruit, &c., were freely served out; the boat ploughed its way westward, and at 7 p.m. all reached the Home in safety, where a substantial tea was prepared, with a good supply of plum-cake, &c., when, after family worship, they all retired to rest early, being somewhat exhausted by the day's exertion.

The conduct of the boys throughout the day was praiseworthy. All seemed to do their best in the effort to help one another, and to please those responsible for them. To take 200 rough boys in good health, and with a high flow of spirits, for a day's holiday, without an occasion for a sharp word or even a discouraging frown, speaks volumes for the kind of moral training kept up at this Institution.

The expenses of the outing were met by the contributions of a few kind and sympathising friends.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER FOR SUNDAY AND RAGGED SCHOOLS,

SUNDAY, *October 20th*, and MONDAY, *October 21st*, 1878.

CONFERENCE meetings have recently been held in the committee-room of the Sunday School Union, on the subject of special prayer for the successful working of Sunday and Ragged Schools. The persons invited to the conferences were the officers and members of committees of the following societies:—The Sunday School Union, the Church of England Sunday School Institute, the Wesleyan Sunday School Union, and the Ragged School Union.

It was arranged to devote for this purpose of special prayer two days in October, namely, Sunday the 20th, and the day following, and it was further agreed that in each following year the third Sunday in October and the day following be definitely fixed for the same purpose.

The Sunday School Union took the initiative in convening the conference, and have just issued the following circulars to all Sunday

Schools throughout the country, and the Committee of the Ragged School Union hope the friends of Ragged Schools will unite heartily in carrying out the suggestions it contains.

"The Committee of the Sunday School Union in renewing their call for Universal Prayer on behalf of Sunday Schools, gratefully recognise the fact that since their first invitation in 1872, the Christian Church has, by almost universal assent, agreed to set apart this season at which the Teachers in every part of the world may blend their supplications together for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the children and young persons of all countries.

The Committee have conferred with their brethren of kindred Institutions, and it has been thought desirable that the Third Sunday in the month of October of each year, together with the following day, should be the days thus set apart to this sacred purpose.

The necessity for increased consecration on the part of all Teachers is admitted; and having regard to the strenuous efforts made by many to depreciate the observance of the Christian Sabbath, and by others to spread rationalistic views amongst our rising youth, there is the greatest need for a deeper and more earnest spiritual teaching. This can only be done by the rich bestowment of the Holy Spirit upon those who teach, and hence the necessity for renewed devotion and earnest pleading for power from on high.

It is suggested that the following arrangements should, as far as practicable, be observed:—

That on Lord's-day Morning, October 20th, from 7 to 8 o'clock, all Christians, in private, offer prayer on behalf of Sunday Schools.

That the opening engagements of the Morning School be preceded by a meeting of the Teachers for Prayer.

That Ministers be asked to preach Special Sermons upon the Claims of the Sunday School upon the Teachers and the Church.

That in the Afternoon the ordinary engagements of each School be shortened, and that the Scholars be gathered for a devotional service, interspersed with singing and appropriate addresses. To this service the Parents of the Scholars might be invited.

That at some time during the Evening the Teachers, in union with other Christians, meet for Thanksgiving and Prayer.

That on Monday Morning, October 21st, between the hours of 7 and 8, Teachers should bring their Scholars in private prayer before God.

That in the course of the day the Female Teachers of each School hold a meeting for united Prayer and Thanksgiving.

That in the Evening each Church or Congregation be invited to hold

a meeting, at which the interests of the Sunday School should form the theme of the prayers and addresses.

Many have been the mercies bestowed, and great have been the benefits realised in answer to former supplications, and thus the Ebenezers of the past should lead us to expect the fulfilment of the promises which are 'Yea and Amen in Christ Jesus.'"

SCHOLARS' PRIZES FOR 1878.

THE Committee of the Ragged School Union have decided to award the usual prizes for the current year to servants in places who have been scholars in the schools in connection with the Society. The prizes will be awarded under the same conditions as last year, copies of which have been sent to all the schools for the information of both teachers and scholars. The forms of application will be ready for delivery by the 1st of December, but can only be obtained by application at the office of the Society, No. 1, Exeter Hall.

A BIG TEACHING WIGWAM.

SHINGWAUK INDUSTRIAL HOME.

THE Rev. E. F. Wilson, son of the venerable Vicar of Islington, is carrying on among the North American Indians an excellent missionary work. One of the most successful branches of his labours is centred in the Shingwauk Home for the Christian training and education of Indian boys, at Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, of which the *Algoma Missionary News* gives the following report:—

Commencing five years ago with some two hundred dollars collected through the instrumentality of the old Indian Chief "Little Pine," who, "unhired by any one," as he proudly stated, left his home at Garden River, and travelled many a mile through Canada addressing meetings and asking that a "big teaching wigwam" might be built for the children of his people,—our work has now, under God's blessing, so far extended itself, as to comprise within its sphere of operations two institutions,—one for Indian boys and one for Indian girls maintained at an expenditure of upwards of 7,000 dols. per annum. We can but open this our third annual report of the Shingwauk Home with expressions of deep gratitude to God for His mercy and love in guiding us, thus far, through fire and storm, in prosperity and hope, in doubt and in disappointment, in weakness and in strength—and with the Prophet we would gratefully mark the progress we have made,

and inscribe upon the wayside stone the words, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us." We can but remember only too vividly the scenes we have passed through ere our Institution was brought into its present state of existence—the journey to England with Chief Buhkwujjenene, the anxiety caused by the withdrawal of help by the Missionary Society upon whom before we had leaned, the hopeful feelings excited by the receipt of that anonymous letter promising £100 per annum if we would remain at our post; then the return to Canada, the planning of the simple frame building, the arrival of our Indian pupils, the opening ceremonies, the flag flying from the roof. . . Then, six days after that terrible fire—everything we possessed destroyed in a few hours—the tolling of the bell two mornings later for the little child whose death was caused by the exposure of that cruel night, the sad journey to Collingwood, the funeral there in the dusky twilight. . . Then, from all this, what has sprung? Immense sympathy was stirred up—sympathy which has never yet ceased to flow. God put it into the hearts of His people to care for us—to care for our Indian boys and girls. God commended our cause to the consideration of His people, and thus we began to live, and thus we still live, looking to God for our daily bread, striving to live a life of faith according to the mind of God. We have now our large substantial stone building for the boys, with grounds laid out, farm gradually being brought under cultivation, workshops for teaching trades, &c. And we have also, thank God, a second building, the Wawanosh Home, partially erected, and already occupied by the Lady Superintendent and a few girls. May the contemplation of our success thus far make us grateful, but may it not make us proud, may it not tempt us to rest on our oars, or to take our ease and rest, for after all what a little turn it takes to overthrow even the best and most substantial work! We have no endowment, no settled annual grant from a Society to meet our expenditure, and we do not ask it, we do not wish for it. If our work be not of that character, that under God's blessing it will rouse the sympathy and draw spontaneously upon the charity of Christian people, if it will not of its own merit commend itself as a godly and useful enterprise to the charitably disposed, we feel that it were better for it to fail. We simply desire to tell what God has done and is doing for us, and to Him we look to preserve the meal in the barrel from wasting and the oil in the cruse from failing. We have now forty-eight boys in the Home, of which number one is a young man preparing as we hope to be at a future day ordained as a missionary, two are educating as teachers, two are receiving instruction in medicine, two are learning the tinsmith's trade, three are carpenters, three bootmakers, three tailors, three printers, one blacksmith, and three are learning

practical farming; the remainder of the boys are all under twelve years of age, and are at school all the time. We have boys now from fourteen Indian reserves, representing a population of upwards of 3,000 Indians.

All the work of the Institution is done by the boys, under the supervision of the master and a working matron. The boys who work at trades receive pay after their first year, a portion of which they are required to put in the savings bank. A boy constantly at work for the two years of his apprenticeship will thus lay by about forty dollars, which sum is to be invested for him in tools and other things that he may require when his term is expired. The grand object that we have in view next to the Christian training is, with God's blessing, to wean our boys altogether from their old savage life; to instil into them civilized tastes, to teach them English thoroughly, to encourage their intercourse with white people, and, in fact, to make Canadians of them. We feel persuaded that this is the right way to deal with the Indian, and we believe also that this is the wish and hope of the more advanced and civilised of the Indians themselves. In the words of Lord Dufferin, in his admirable address at the laying of the foundation-stone of our Institution, we would say that it is our purpose "to lay hold of the rising generation of the Indians by instructing them in the arts and habits of civilised life, and to put them in a position to join with us on equal terms in our endeavour to build up this great country, so that the various races may be united by common interests and in a common cause."

THE TEACHERS' ANNUAL EXCURSION.

For several years past the Committee of the Ragged School Union have given invitations to the masters and mistresses of London Ragged Schools to spend a day far removed from the smoke, din, and bustle of the metropolis, among green fields and pleasant associations. Bushey Park and Hampton Court Palace have been frequently chosen for this purpose; but on the last occasion, through the kind permission of Lord and Lady Salisbury, obtained by Lord Shaftesbury, the teachers and friends had the great gratification of spending Saturday, July 13th last, in Hatfield Park, Hertfordshire. The whole company, in parties of fifty, were kindly allowed to pass through the fine historical mansion of the Cecils. The person conducting the different parties through the house explained the pictures, articles of interest and *virtu*, parts of the house, &c., which considerably added to the pleasure of the day. The vineyard (a very remarkable part of the park) was visited by special per-

mission, and excited the admiration of those privileged to pass through it. The maze afforded great entertainment to the younger members of the company, while the elders, from their vantage-ground above, were much amused at the sudden stoppage in a blind alley, and at the many efforts that had to be made before the goal was reached. When satisfied with their central position the fun was renewed to watch the varied efforts to release themselves from the intracacies of this well-planned and well-preserved maze.

Refreshments were provided in a marquee for the company. Towards the close of the day, with H. R. Williams, Esq., presiding, expression was given by the friends present to their feelings of gratitude for such a pleasurable opportunity of spending a long summer day together in such an enjoyable place as Hatfield. Votes of thanks were passed to Lord and Lady Salisbury for their kind permission to visit their mansion, to the Committee of the Ragged School Union for their very considerate and acceptble invitation, to H. R. Williams, Esq., and the respective officers of the Union, for the attention paid to details that so much added to the comfort and enjoyment of the day. The weather was all that could be desired. The company was safely conveyed to and fro by the Great Northern Railway Company.

THE CHILDREN'S DAY IN THE COUNTRY.

"A day in the country" once in the summer is now looked forward to as an institution. The working classes, almost to an individual, claim it, and intensely enjoy it. Trades, firms, companies, societies, clubs, &c., have their fixed days for this relaxation, and the poor Ragged School scholar is not overlooked. How could they, with a pair of such vigilant eyes as Lord Shaftesbury's fixed upon them? As soon as the summer approached, he began to inquire what was to be done to give a holiday to his ragged regiment. The great question was, how to raise the means to pay the cost, which was partly solved by the issue of a circular note to the following effect:—

"June 22nd, 1878.

"Once more I venture to request your bounty towards 'a day in the country' for a large number of children in our Ragged and Evening Schools.

"I am satisfied, from long experience, that such recreation, though it comes but rarely to them, has the most happy and beneficial effects both on mind and body.

"I am, your faithful servant,

"SHAFTESBURY."

P.S. Contributions will be thankfully received by Joseph G. Gent, at No. 1, Exeter Hall, W.C., and will be duly acknowledged.

This note has been very kindly responded to, but not to the extent needed, as when the costs had to be paid the assets were not enough to pay them, notwithstanding the generous efforts of special friends, of which the following is a sample extracted from the *Record*:—

"A Day in the Country.

"Sir,—We have not had our summer treat at our Sunday Schools yet, but we have had our anniversary sermon previous to the treat on Tuesday next, and, as customary for the last few years, we had a collection on behalf of Ragged School treats in London, which consisted of 594 coins from £1 downwards, there being no less than 184 farthings, 92 halfpence, 201 pennies, and so on, amounting altogether to £6 9s. 4d., which we hope will send at least 150 children into the country for a day's fresh air.

"Having had this collection for some years, and finding the average given to be about £5, induces me to send the particulars to you, in the hope other schools in the country who always get their treat without much trouble, and nothing to pay for it, may be induced to have a collection either before or after, and send it as a 'thank-offering' to the Ragged School Union, Exeter Hall, and by this simple means I believe there would be very little lacking to give all the poor children in London their day in the country. And it is a practical way to bring home to our children how to sympathise with and help others.

"Your obedient servant,

"Edward F. Gedge,

"Secretary to St. Matthew's Sunday Schools.

"Redhill, 8th July, 1878."

The long looked forward day at last arrived on Thursday, July 18th, when 1865 children were conveyed in vans and steamboats from their schoolhouses to Bushey Park, in charge of 174 of their teachers. Provision had, therefore, to be made for 2039 persons for that long summer day. The food, the drink, the toys, were ample for all, and no stint. Drink was in the greatest demand, for the day proved the hottest of the late more than usually hot summer, but the supply of water and tea was equal to all demands.

THE MOTHERS' HOLIDAY.

For a second year an effort has been made to enable some of the mothers of children in Ragged Schools to have the enjoyment and benefit of spending a good part of a day among bright flowers and green fields. Battersea Park, for such a purpose, furnishes all that could be wished;

it is easily reached from the principal bridges by steam-packets, and the company is landed at the Park pier. The fare is only 2*d.* each way, and a good tea of cake, bread and butter, &c., can be provided for 8*d.*, so that a shilling will pay all costs for each woman.

In the latter end of July fifty mothers from the Fleet Ditch Ragged School, Little Saffron Hill, and, on September 17th, fifty more from the London Street Ragged School, Dockhead, enjoyed this treat, the cost of which was defrayed by funds supplied by Lord Shaftesbury.

BOOKS, AND WHAT IS THOUGHT OF THEM.

"Nothing to Nobody."

This is a touching and interesting tale well told by Brenda, and published by Shaw and Co., of Paternoster Row. It is a half-crown book, and would well repay a perusal. It is the tale of an orphan girl terribly neglected, till she concludes she is "nothing to nobody," and is left a helpless and a hopeless waif. In her loneliness, destitution, and sorrow she asks herself the question, "Why was I ever born?" and with heart-breaking sobs she concludes, "I wish I was dead, I do!" In the depths of her trouble Barbara Russell, the clergyman's daughter, comes across her path, and speaks the first kind and soothing word that ever fell upon the poor child's ears. This was the turning-point of the child's career, and before we leave her she has become the useful, cheerful, willing servant in the clergyman's family.

Mr. Alfred Wells has from the tale compiled an abridgment, and interspersed it with fifteen well-known and well-adapted songs, and in this form presents to the public a musically illustrated Reading to enliven a winter's evening by means of a touching tale and well-selected music. The pamphlet of 24 pages, with the music and words of 15 songs, and as many extracts of the tale for reading, is published for 4*d.* We may expect to see this new service of song stand abreast with "Eva," of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," and "Jessica's First Prayer," in pleasant and profitable entertainment of the people.

NIGHT SCHOOLS.

In consequence of the efforts made in the winter of 1876-7 the increased number of scholars over that of the winter of 1875-6 was 2,099. During the winter of 1877-8 the number was further increased by 436. It is hoped that the efforts put forth during the winter of 1878-9 will result in greater increase, for the number of the young people in London needing elementary education is very great. The Committee of the Ragged School Union continue their grants in aid, and have re-engaged the services of Mr. Kirk to aid Mr. Curtis in the visitations from

September to May. The visits of these gentlemen may be expected in the following order—viz:—

	Mr. Curtis.		Mr. Kirk.
October	North and East London	.....	South and West London.
November.....	East and South ,,	.....	West and North ,,
December	South and West ,,	.....	North and East ,,
January.....	West and North ,,	.....	East and South ,,
February	North and East ,,	.....	South and West ,,
March	East and South ,,	.....	West and North ,,
April	South and West ,,	.....	North and East ,,

By this arrangement each agent will have the same district in his charge for two consecutive months, and will be able to go over the whole of the districts in all parts twice during the season.

REPORT ON REFORMATORIES AND INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS.

The twenty-first Report of the Inspector appointed to visit the certified Reformatory and Industrial Schools of Great Britain was issued in August. The schools in general are stated to be judiciously and efficiently managed. Last year it was reported that while Industrial Schools were on the increase throughout the country, the admissions to Reformatories were on the decline. This year, while Industrial Schools are still springing up in new localities, and some of the existing ones are being enlarged, an increase is also reported in the numbers detained in Reformatories. "At first sight," says the Inspector, "this looks as if juvenile crime were on the increase, but I do not think this is the case. Some part of the increase may be due to the depressed state of trade. There has been less demand for labour, and of the number of boys out of work it would be strange if some did not get into trouble. But the principal reason is, I think, that many boys are now sent to Reformatories whose cases might have been dealt with under the Industrial Schools Act, and whose age, although no legal bar to their detention in a Reformatory, would to my mind have suggested the advisability of resorting to the milder discipline and less criminal associations of the Industrial School." The Report proceeds:—"I should feel very much disinclined, except in special cases, to sentence any boy under twelve years of age, or for a first conviction, to a Reformatory. Boys of ten and eleven years of age have, with few exceptions, not been long enough apprenticed to crime, or sufficiently vitiated by evil associations, to necessitate the severer measure; a sharp, short punishment would meet the case. One objection, and I think a valid one, to sending boys of tender years to Reformatories, is, that as the law now stands, five years is the limit of the term of detention, so that the boy committed at ten can claim his discharge at fifteen, when he is too young to earn his own

living honestly, and before his character is sufficiently formed to enable him to resist the temptations which must meet him at every turn. During the year 1877 two boys were committed at the ages of seven years, two at eight years, seventeen at nine years, while 250 were between ten and twelve."

The educational condition of the schools is reported to be fairly satisfactory. The Report says:—"The raw material on which we have to work is frequently none of the best, and becomes more difficult to deal with when, as is so often the case in Reformatories, boys of thirteen, fourteen, and fifteen are committed with little or no previous education. We succeed, however, in obtaining generally good results by not attempting too much. Our endeavour is to make the children write a legible hand, read well, and understand what they read, work correctly in the simpler rules of arithmetic as far as proportion and practice, and write well from dictation.

"The number of Reformatory Schools at present is 54 in England and 12 in Scotland, namely:—England: Boys, Protestant, 32; girls, 14; boys, Roman Catholic, 5; girls, 3. Scotland: Boys, Protestant, 7; girls, 3; boys, Roman Catholic, 1; girls, 1. The London Female Preventive Reformatory for Girls, 5, Parson's Green, Fulham, was certified December 28, 1877. About 40 Roman Catholic boys are maintained in the North-eastern Reformatory at Netherton, in a separate division of the school. Of the above schools three are training ships—the Cornwall, near Purfleet, and the Akbar, at Liverpool, for Protestant boys; and the Clarence, at Liverpool, for Roman Catholics. The number under detention on December 31, 1877, was:—England: Protestant, 3,500 boys and 789 girls; Roman Catholic, 1,155 and 191. Scotland: Protestant, 734 boys and 143 girls; Roman Catholic, 232 boys and 109 girls; total, 5,621 boys and 1,232 girls. Of these were:—On licence, 691 boys and 117 girls; in prison, 23 and 4; absconded, 72 and 11; giving a total actually in the schools of 4,835 boys and 1,100 girls. The corresponding numbers for last year were:—England: Protestant, 3,325 boys and 795 girls; Roman Catholic, 1,154 and 176. Scotland: Protestant, 723 boys and 135 girls; Roman Catholic, 200 and 106. Total 5,402 boys and 1,212 girls. Of these were:—On licence 739 boys and 132 girls; in prison, 13 and 6; absconded, not recovered, 71 and 19; giving a total of 823 boys and 157 girls. These numbers show an increase in the year of 219 boys, and an increase of 20 girls. The admissions to Reformatory Schools in 1877 were 1,879—namely, 1,530 boys, 349 girls, showing an increase of 264 boys and an increase of 95 girls on 1876. They were distributed as follows:—England: boys, Protestant, 1,003; girls, 227; boys, Roman Catholic, 269; girls, 59. Scotland: boys, Protestant, 176; girls, 37; boys, Roman Catholic, 82; girls, 26.

TWO PAIRS OF PICTURES.

"ATTRACTION—COMPULSION."

THE first pair gives a good illustration of what could be effected by a little ingenuity and study of nature, and what was attempted by brute force and the absence of common-sense. In one picture is a donkey with a couple of boys astride it, going at its quickest pace after a bunch of carrots held by the foremost boy, at the end of a stick, in front of its nose. The companion was the donkey under different treatment. Two boys were doing their utmost to make it go, one belabouring it with a stout stick, while the other was pushing its hind-quarters with all his might without getting the creature to take a step in advance.

The first of the second pair of pictures is John Pounds going about Portsmouth Dockyard distributing hot potatoes among the little ragged urchins, and who did so with a grace and smile that made the little ones fasten on to him till they found out his whereabouts when at home; then they afterwards paid him daily visits, with a feeling described by Shakespeare when he wrote,

"One touch of nature makes the whole world kin."

John Pounds availed himself of their regular and voluntary visits to give them a little elementary teaching. In this way he formed around him a school, and taught his pupils while he earned a living at mending shoes. The companion picture was recently furnished by the *Globe*, and the description we give in full.

"Poplar and the Isle of Dogs constitute a region of which most Londoners have heard more or less, but of which very few except the inhabitants themselves have any personal knowledge. It is a peninsula enclosed on three sides by the river, down to which it extends in a struggling maze of docks, and wharves, and muddy creeks, and strange little nooks and corners, into which the adventurous explorer, in quest of any particular address, dives deeper and deeper with an ever-increasing sense of inextricability; that is to say, the explorer who is strange to the locality would do so. I and the School Board visitor, however, set out this morning with a perfect knowledge of this intricate locality. We start at 10.30 from the East India Dock gates, and we plunge promptly down into the neighbourhood, where we know almost everybody, and, what is somewhat unfortunate, where everybody knows us. 'We know most of the mothers and all the children, or if there are any we do not know who come across our path, it is our duty to make their acquaintance without delay, to take down their names and addresses, and any little items of information that can be coaxed out of them with respect to their educational status and

advantages. If they enlighten us it is pure condescension on their part, they are not bound to do so. We are quite conscious that we are taking a liberty in stopping them at all. If these barefooted little Britons were to decline to be interrupted in their walks abroad, and refused to hold any intercourse with us, the law which requires the School Board to see after their education would probably hold them quite justified in doing so. As to marching them off to school or to their own homes with a view to instituting inquiries about them, it has been distinctly ruled by the magistrates that there is no justification for such an alarming interference with the liberty of the subject, and that any attempt of the kind might lead to a very reasonable breach of the peace by some elder brother in resisting the capture.

"Under these rather trying restrictions it behoves us to be subtle and astute, and ever to have our most insinuating demeanour at perfect command. Sometimes we have no opportunity of bringing our conciliatory powers into play. *Yonder, for instance, is a most promising little group of ragamuffins assembled round the dolefullest of barrel-organs, and we bear down upon it with book in hand prepared for a great haul. Alas! we are known on the instant, and several pairs of heels are seen to whisk merrily round the nearest corner, leaving behind only the steady school-goers and urchins under five years of age, who, strong and jubilant in the immunity conceded to them by the law in consideration of their tender years, dog our heels for a long time with a well-sustained chorus of defiance.*

"These casual encounters in the street, however, are only minor incidents in our day's work, which consists mainly in rapping at the doors of absentees from school and interviewing the parents or guardians. The work looks simple enough at the outset; but it soon becomes apparent that it is by no means so simple as might be supposed, and that upon the manner in which the duty of the visitor is performed depends in a very important degree the popularity of the School Board with the poor, as well as the success of the Board in dealing with a very large proportion of those who ought to be under its tuition. It is a duty pre-eminently demanding "the iron hand in the velvet glove," and can be satisfactorily performed only by the officer who combines firmness and a conciliatory manner with a good deal of shrewd discrimination of character and an intimate knowledge of the people with whom he has to deal. It is very pitiful to hear the stories of sickness and suffering, of want of work, of domestic trouble of all sorts, of accidents and privations—all associated with earnest protestations of the best intentions and the most strenuous law. A person of ordinary susceptibilities would find his first week's work as a School Board visitor in a poor district a very heart-wearying experience; and, if disposed to put his sympathy into a practical shape,

would perhaps do as my colleague did in his early days—send on story after story of dire distress to the Charity Organisation Society, only to find many of them tissues of falsehood designed to evade the requirements of the Board. The visitor has to be carefully on his guard against this sort of thing; and the fear is that, after a little familiarity with the poor and their trickery, he will acquire a cynical scepticism which will dispose him to leave out of consideration their real troubles and difficulties, and, so far as lies in him, to deal out to them the untempered law, wherever it seems likely to avail. This, on the other hand, of course, has to be carefully avoided; and the discretion of the School Board visitor is severely taxed in the attempt to distinguish the valid and genuine reason from the specious and lying.

"The district upon which we are working is one comprising about 1,200 families and some 3,200 children. We have to be on our ground for seven hours a day; and, with casual inquiries in the street, find it a tolerably stiff day's work to make calls at the rate of about 300 a week. Every week something like this number of reports have to be made, and on these reports the district committee in a certain measure base their action with regard to the exercise of compulsory powers. The visitor is the point at which the people and the Board come in contact; and it is sincerely to be hoped that all the visiting is carried on with as much tact and discrimination as my colleague has displayed to-day. Wherever this is done it would be impossible, I fancy, to do half a day's duty among the most troublesome of our population without perceiving that it is slowly, perhaps, but surely, being instilled into them that it is a right and a necessary thing to send their children to school; that to neglect to do so is discreditable; and that it is not a tyrannous, high-handed dealing with the poor to insist upon it, but a wholesome law established for the welfare of their own children and for the good of society."

PAGE FOR THE YOUNG.

GIFFORD THE COBBLER.

A Boston paper gives an instance of the force of character:—"William Gifford at the age of fifteen was a shoemaker's apprentice, and in the very abyss of poverty. In his autobiography he says:—'I possessed, at this time, but one book, and that was a treatise on algebra, given me by a young woman who had found it in a lodging-house. Although unable to understand it, I somehow considered it a treasure, a treasure certainly locked up from me. It supposed the

reader to be well acquainted with simple questions, and I knew nothing of the matter. My master's son had purchased Fenning's Introduction—this was precisely what I wanted—but he carefully concealed it from me, and I was indebted to what seemed like chance alone for stumbling upon its hiding-place. I sat up the greater part of several nights successively, and before he suspected that his treatise was discovered, I had completely mastered it. I could now enter upon my own book, and that carried me pretty far into the science; but not without considerable difficulty, for I had not a farthing, nor a friend to give me one; pens, ink, and paper, therefore, were for the most part as completely out of my reach as a crown and sceptre. There was, indeed, a resource, but the utmost caution and secrecy were necessary in applying it. I beat out pieces of leather as smooth as possible, and wrought my problems on them with a blunted awl; for the rest, my memory was tenacious, and I could multiply and divide by it to a great extent.'"

"I HAIN'T NO MOTHER."—THE GAOL-BIRD.

"MAY I not stay? I'll do anything you tell me; cut wood, go for water, and do all your errands."

The troubled eyes of the speaker were filled with tears. It was a lad that stood at the outer door, pleading with a kindly-looking woman, who seemed to doubt the reality of his good intentions.

The cottage stood by itself on a bleak moor, or what in Scotland would have been called such. The time was near the latter end of November, and a fierce wind rattled the boughs of the only two naked trees near the house, and fled with a shivering sound into the doorway, as if seeking for warmth at the blazing fire within.

The woman was evidently loth to grant the boy's request, and a peculiar look stamped upon his features would have suggested to any mind an idea of depravity far beyond his years!

But the woman's heart could not resist the sorrow in those large, but by no means handsome, grey eyes.

"Come in, at any rate, till the good man comes home. There, sit down by the fire; you look perishing with cold."

Presently came the tramp of heavy shoes, the door was swung open with a quick jerk, and the "good man" presented himself, wearied with labour.

A look of doubt passed between his wife and himself. He, too, scanned the boy's face with an expression not evincing satisfaction, but, nevertheless, he bade him come to the table, where he soon dispatched his supper.

Day after day passed, and yet the boy begged to be kept "only till to-morrow;" so the good couple, after due consideration, concluded that as long as he was docile, and worked so heartily, they would retain him.

One day, in the middle of winter, a pedlar long accustomed to trade at the cottage, made his appearance, and disposed of his goods readily, as if he had been waited for.

"You have a boy there splitting wood, I see," he said, pointing to the yard.

"Yes; do you know him?"

"I have seen him," replied the pedlar, evasively.

"And where? Who is he? What is he?"

"A gaol-bird," and the pedlar swung his pack over his shoulder. "That boy, young as he looks, I saw in court myself, and heard his sentence—'Ten months.' He's a hard one. You'd do well to look carefully after him."

Oh! there was something so horrible in the word "gaol." The poor woman trembled as she laid away her purchases; nor could she be easy till she called the boy in and assured him that she knew that dark part of his history.

Ashamed, distressed, the boy hung down his head; his cheeks seemed bursting with the hot blood; his lips quivered, and anguish was painted as vividly upon his forehead as if the words were branded into the flesh.

"Tell me," said the woman, who stood off far enough for flight, if that should be necessary, "how came you to go so young to that dreadful place? Where was your mother—where?"

"Oh!" exclaimed the boy, with a burst of grief that was terrible to behold. "Oh! I hain't no mother! Oh! I hain't had nobody since I was a baby. If I only had a mother," he continued, his anguish growing vehement, and the tears rushing out from his strange-looking grey eyes, "I wouldn't ha' been bound out, and kicked and cuffed, and laid on to with whips. I wouldn't ha' been saucy, and got knocked down, and run away, and stole because I was hungry. Oh! I hain't got no mother, I hain't got no mother; I hain't had no mother since I was a baby."

And did that woman stand there unmoved? Did she coldly bid him pack up and be off—the gaol-bird?

No! She went up to that boy, not to hasten him away, but to lay her hand kindly and softly on his head; to tell him to look up, and from henceforth find in her a mother. Yes, she even put her arm about the neck of that forsaken, deserted child; she poured from her

mother's heart sweet, womanly words—words of counsel and tenderness.

Did the boy leave her?

Never! He is with her still, a vigorous, manly, promising youth. The unfavourable cast of his countenance has given place to an open, pleasing expression, with depth enough to make it an interesting study. His foster-father is dead, his good foster-mother aged and sickly; but she knows no want. The once poor outcast is her only dependence, and nobly does he repay the trust.—*Workmen's Hall Messenger.*

Notices of Meetings.

HAMOND SQUARE, HOXTON.

In June last a meeting of teachers and friends connected with this school was held, for the purpose of presenting Mr. F. Ramsey, the superintendent, with a testimonial. There was a good attendance.

Tea being concluded, Mr. Dowthwaite was called to the chair, and after singing and prayer he explained the object of the meeting. He first dealt with the question of testimonials, and showed that there were cases in which such expressions of friendship and respect were very appropriate, and then dwelt upon the services that Mr. Ramsey had rendered in connection with the Hamond Square Schools, and spoke of the high estimation in which he was held by all who had the pleasure of working with him. He finally handed him a handsome silver watch, and expressed in fitting terms the affection and esteem of the teachers, and their hope that he would be sustained in his work until the time when he should hear the Saviour's voice saying to him, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." He concluded by reading an illuminated address, signed by the representatives of the school.

Mr. Ramsey, after thanking the teachers for this expression of their kindly feelings towards him, gave a very interesting account of the history of the school, and of his connection with it. He said he believed it was the first building erected in London expressly for Ragged School purposes, and at the time he joined it the scholars were some of the roughest in London. He came to it in 1862, and there were then only three of the teachers who are at present connected with the school. Some eight years ago, Mr. Aldridge having resigned the superintendence of the evening school, he was chosen to fill his place. He felt altogether unfit for such a post, but determined to do his best, and has remained at it till now. The schools used to be very crowded, more than a thousand attendances having been made in the aggregate during the three Sunday

services, and the Day School and other operations being energetically carried on. Of late years there had been a falling-off in the work, owing partly to the loss of the old workers whose places had not been adequately supplied. Among these, in particular, was Mr. Ansell, to whom the founding of the school was mainly due, and who continued to take a lively interest in it till his death.

There was also an increased difficulty found in obtaining funds for the necessary expenses, and even when, by the operation of the Elementary Education Act, the maintenance of the Day School had no longer to be provided for, the workers found themselves burdened with a debt, and thought it best to try to connect themselves with some church which would relieve them of their financial difficulties, and enable them to recruit their staff of teachers. Accordingly an arrangement was made some five years ago with the church at Hare Court Chapel, Canonbury, and the schools have since existed as part of its mission work.

In concluding, Mr. Ramsey said that he believed the teachers had now, for the first time since his connection with them, acted without asking his advice, and he supposed that under the circumstances he must forgive them, but he could never forget them.

The meeting was afterwards addressed by Mr. Lemmon, who spoke of the many unexpected ways in which the influence of a Sunday School teacher might be spread, even to distant parts of the world; by Mr. Watson, who described his first impressions of Mr. Ramsey, and who warmly eulogised him for the fidelity and zeal which he had displayed in his work—by Mr. G. Smith, who graphically described the school twenty years ago, and mentioned encouraging instances in which the blessing of God had been seen in the work, and by Messrs. Bolton, Dive, and F. Wood, whose connection with the school is more recent, but who joined with preceding speakers in their testimony to the value of Mr. Ramsey's services.

This very pleasant meeting concluded with prayer and the singing of the doxology.

MARIGOLD PLACE, ROTHERHITHE.

This school is known by the name of "Stephen the Yeoman," because its formation was helped from the profits of the sale of a book with that title. Its last annual meeting was held in June. Donald Matheson, Esq., presided, who said: There was little need in these days to enlarge on the happy effects of such labours as went forward from week to week in that school. The workers belonged to a devoted band who, in the course of a few years, had, in London, rescued from the gutter and from lives of vice and crime, no fewer than 300,000 children. There was still plenty of room for Ragged Schools, and he hoped that Stephen the Yeoman would long continue to be the blessing to the neighbourhood which now for so many years it had proved. No doubt to the workers weariness often came, for the work was arduous. Still, a blessing accompanied it, and he trusted that these workers would be strengthened to labour steadily on. Mr. Matheson concluded by calling on Mr. Davis, the secretary, to read the eighteenth annual report.

It stated that the Sunday School in the past year has enjoyed a season of great prosperity—the numbers in attendance being larger than in any previous year The average number during the winter was more than 300. The only limit to the numbers is that fixed by the capabilities of the schoolroom.

Of the character of the children who thus crowd in, the report states: "They came from the lanes and alleys of the neighbourhood, from homes where the name of God is seldom heard. The lessons they have learned from infancy by the fireside and in the street are such as naturally lead to lives of vice and crime. By nature, by training, by habit, they are opposed to all religion, and care nothing for the glorious promises which the Gospel holds out to them." In referring to those who labour to make out of this material God-fearing young men and women, the report continues: They belong to many sections of the Christian Church. They come from different parts of Bermondsey and Rotherhithe. They are united by a common love for the Saviour. They strive with one common zeal for the furtherance of His kingdom. There had been a summer excursion, a dinner at Christmas, and a very successful gathering of old scholars. Twenty of the children had been awarded prizes by the Ragged School Union.

The Day School continues to form one of the most interesting features of the Mission work. In spite of the fact that three large Board Schools are in the immediate vicinity, the attendance has in no way been affected. Acknowledged by the Education Department, the school, under the care of its devoted teacher, has held on its way. During the winter months dinners were given to the children. The sight presented on these occasions is described as very touching. "The little ones may then be seen gathering round the forecourt, through snowstorm, rain, and biting cold, more often than not with heads and feet bare and blue, their little benumbed fingers tightly clutching tin or earthenware vessels, broken or bent, intended to contain the portion of meat and soup falling to their share." The number of children on the roll for the past year was 177, the average attendance 121. 2,252 dinners were given.

In addition to the Sunday and Day Schools, there are Night Schools, a Penny Bank, and a Band of Hope. Besides these, a very successful Mothers' Meeting, 130 mothers having been present at one time. With this various Clubs are associated, and a well-attended Bible Class, also another Day School in Butler's Place, and this school had lately been examined by the Government Inspector with the best results.

The Rev. Burman Cassin said he had experienced considerable difficulty in finding Marigold Place. He had never heard of it till lately. He had heard of the marigold plant, which had been described to him as a plant of bad smell. Bermondsey was rather famous for its odours, perhaps there was a hidden meaning in Marigold Place. Inquiries on his way thither had discovered for him that Marigold Place was "out by the Star" and "down by the Mill." There were aristocratic associations in the vicinity, for he had

come by a Spa; foreign, for he had journeyed by way of Jamaica; and ecclesiastical, for Salisbury Street was close at hand. He had been greatly pleased by the card of invitation which had been sent him. It was printed in blue, and therefore must mean that the principles advocated in Stephen the Yeoman Mission were true blue. He was sure that the aim of the workers was to conserve the great principles of evangelical faith. He had tried to find out who Stephen was. He had heard of Stephen the Deacon, Stephen the King, Stephen the Pope, but not even the Encyclopædia could tell him of Stephen the Yeoman. But he knew that *Stephanos* meant a crown, and that the Lord will yet give one to all His faithful followers; he further knew that Yeoman suggested brave, earnest thoughts, and that both together were very appropriate to a Ragged School. Christ has given a peculiar dignity to love for children. If that love in our hearts springs from a proper motive, we have much encouragement to nurse it. If for the love of Christ we receive a child, we receive the Creator into our hearts. We can thus enter into sympathy with the Father of all flesh, and in some measure realise the feelings which move the heart of God. Love a poor, ragged child, and there comes into the heart a smile from the Father Himself.

Mr. Matheson, at the close of Mr. Cassin's address, explained that Stephen the Yeoman was a true-hearted Suffolk farmer, whose life had been written in "England's Yeoman" by Miss Charlesworth, the gifted authoress of "Ministering Children." From the proceeds of "England's Yeoman" Miss Charlesworth had given £100 to found the school in Marigold Place. Hence the name.

Other addresses were given by Mr. Burnet Tabrum, Revs. De Kewer Williams, A. H. Smith, and O. Aslackson.

THE "ONE TUN" RAGGED SCHOOL.

The twenty-first anniversary meeting was held in July, in Perkins's Rents, Westminster. The Earl of Shaftesbury occupied the chair. The rooms were tastefully decorated with wreaths of paper flowers made by the children.

The proceedings opened with prayer. Mr. Payne read the report, which showed that for twenty-one years has this useful mission work among young and old, parents and children, been greatly blessed in the miserable Pye Street district. The aim is to fit young people for service and employment, all receiving a good secular but a sound religious education—the girls being also taught cooking and plain needlework. Prizes are given every year at the annual meeting to the young people in service with good characters; last year twenty were successful candidates, this year sixteen. The Mothers' Meetings, Band of Hope, Working Lads' Institute, and Sunday Evening Services are all prosperous. The mid-day Wednesday Prayer-meeting at one o'clock has been a source of much blessing, remarkable answers to prayer having been granted. A Men's Bible Class in Old Pye Street has been much valued. Three blind men who regularly attend read from Moon's type. So much has this hour's reading been valued that one man having been

obliged to remove a mile off on account of his work regularly attends, whatever may be the weather. The schools have been passed as efficient by both School and Education Boards; the schoolmasters and schoolmistresses, who have been the teachers for nearly nineteen years, have recently received Government certificates. The expenditure of the year has been £667 2*s*. 7¾*d*., the receipts £571 16*s*., leaving a deficit of £95.

The Noble Chairman said he wished to congratulate all the supporters of the school, and particularly their good friend Mrs. Barker-Harrison. He thought they would all agree with him in saying that the work was conducted with great efficiency, and they ought to thank God for the results. His experience tended to show that the lower they went into the depths of human misery, the greater amount of good could be done. His hearers could see what a scriptural education had done for these children who were present. Such an education as they had had tended to improve their social existence, their domestic career, and the extent of their human happiness, for human prosperity was the security and happiness of the domestic system. He was very glad to see that, next to Gospel instruction—which was, of course, the basis and superstructure of all right education—the teaching of cookery was imparted. He believed that a proper knowledge of cookery would go further to improve the masses of the working classes than anything else, for he regretted to say that in England not one working person in five hundred knew how to turn a bit of meat to the best advantage. The system of cookery in this country was wasteful in the extreme, but in France the housewife threw nothing away, nor allowed her good things to evaporate into thin air. A Frenchman would put what he could not eat into his pocket, to eat at another time, and he trusted that such thrifty habits would commend themselves to the poorer classes in this country. He was in France the other day, and ascertained that many of the poor girls there were being trained for nursemaids in England. It was a good idea, and he saw no reason why many of the poor children in this country should not be trained for nursemaids in France, for it would ensure them a decent and honest livelihood. It was the Ragged Schools, and the beneficial movements associated therewith, that tended to a general pacification of the masses of the people. Only the other day he had to speak to a great number of French people—men and women—and he made the remark that if they had been brought together by the operations of societies like those that existed in this country, France would have been spared many of her sorrows. It was their duty now to go forward with redoubled energy, and he trusted that thousands more would bless the day when they came to old Pye Street.

The meeting was also addressed by Sir R. W. Carden, Rev. H. E. Fox, Mr. Curtis, Mr. Harris, and Mr. Sims.

NELSON STREET, CAMBERWELL.

The annual meeting of this school was held in July, in the rooms of Christ Church, Brixton, presided

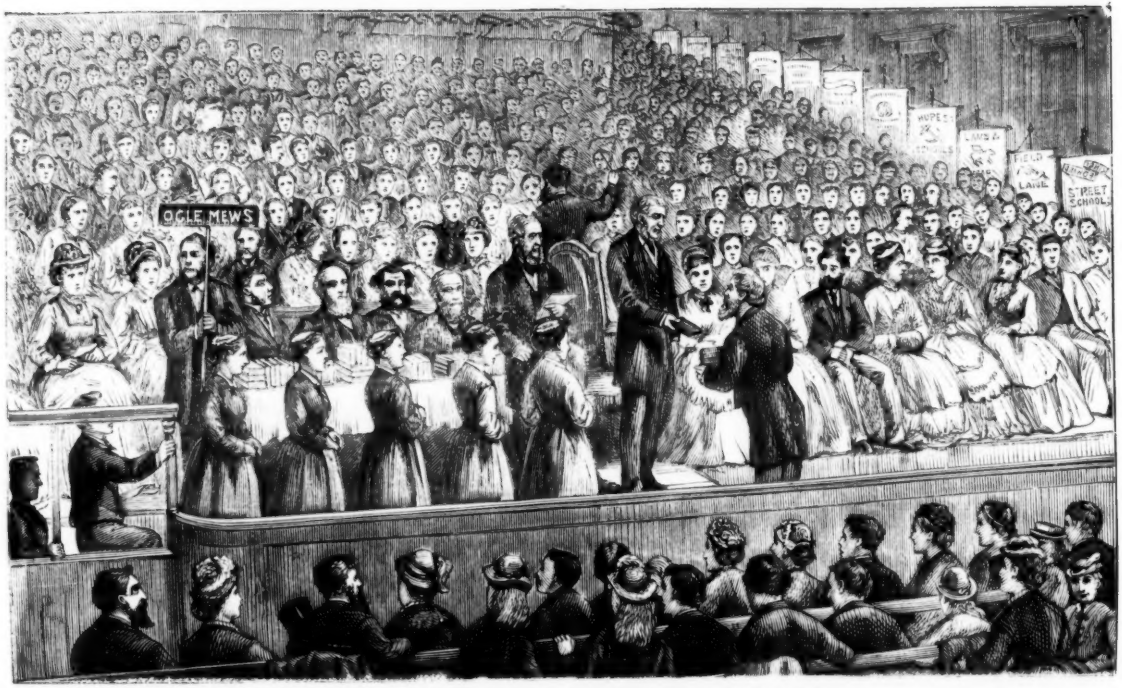
over by the Earl of Shaftesbury, supported by the Rev. Canon Hussey, the Rev. Burman Cassin, and others. The report gave a short history of schools in the neighbourhood, from the year 1810 to the time this Ragged School commenced in 1849. The honoured name of Cranfield was referred to as having seventy years since made Nelson Street one of the scenes of his mission efforts in the South of London. Under varied auspices the work has continued to the present time. The present effort included a Sunday Morning Service, attended by an average of 60 worshippers, in the afternoon by 100 children, and in the evening by 120 rough young people. There were also meetings during the week, consisting of Night Schools, Mothers' Meetings, Band of Hope, Lending Library, and Servants' Registry. The receipts for the year had been £122, and the payments £125.

The meeting was addressed by Rev. C. Stanford. Mr. Curtis, Mr. Rawlings, Mr. Crabb, Hon. A. Kinnaird, Rev. Canon Hussey, and the Rev. B. Cassin.

Lord Shaftesbury said he hoped all the workers would still be in earnest in their duties, for the Ragged Schools had not finished their work; there was as much to be done as there was when the system was first started, on account of the increasing population. A friend of Mr. Cassin had told him that Ragged Schools had done little or no good to educate the poor. He (Lord Shaftesbury) must say, and he hoped Mr. Cassin would pardon him for saying it, that his friend was either uninformed or very foolish. If he wanted proof, let him apply to Sir Charles Reed for his private or official opinion on the subject, and Sir Charles would say more than his (the Earl's) modesty would allow him to say.

In thirty years 220,000 children had been taken off the streets and placed in various situations, after having received a suitable education. Was this nothing? He would not speak disparagingly of the National or Board Schools; they were doing all in their power, but they could not do anything like the work done in Ragged Schools.

The first quarterly meeting of this school, after the last annual meeting, was held in the grounds of Joseph Tritton, Esq., at Norwood, by whom the company had been invited, and for whom he kindly provided tea upon the lawn. After the disposal of the general business, a presentation of a handsome marble timepiece was made to Mr. Beck, the superintendent, on the occasion of his marriage, and as a token of the esteem in which the teachers held his services in the school for the last seven years. Mr. Gent, who presided, with Mr. Kirk, the secretary to the school, presenting the gift in the name of the subscribers, highly complimented Mr. Beck for his zealous and ardent work, and prayed that God would bless him in his wedded life. Mr. Beck returned thanks. A vote of thanks was passed to Mr. and Mrs. Tritton and family, for the kindness shown on this occasion. Mr. Tritton kindly acknowledged the vote, then, with a hymn and prayer, this pleasant visit was brought to a close. The rambles through the wood, the maze, the gardens and the fields, had been much enjoyed.



Distribut'on of Scholars' Prizes by Lord Shaftesbury at Exeter Hall.